

Town of Vernon
Hockanum River Linear Park Committee

Minutes – July 26, 2013

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VERNON TOWN CLERK

13 SEP 30 AM 9:30

Present: Members: Joe King, Ann Letendre, George Arthur;
Bruce Dinnie, Staff Advisor was not able to attend.

The meeting was held at the Lottie Fisk Building, South St. and was called to order at 9:40 am by Chairman Ann Letendre.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of March, 2013 meeting were approved. (May meeting was cancelled). Motion by Arthur, second by King.

2. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Trail Reports

- a. Refer to Arthur and Bellingham reports (attached) for details. George noted that over 500 hours, 120 days were put into trail work year to date.

B. Review of needs – Hockanum River Parks and Parking Areas

- a. Refer to Arthur and Bellingham reports (attached). Of particular note:
 - Paper Mill Pond - needs trees cut and litter pick up in the area near the fencing; bittersweet is growing on the fence. Ro Babcock continues to care for the garden, looks great.
 - West Main Street – river edge trails at playground - benches were destroyed by vandalism; the area is now locked, the benches will not be rebuilt. Locust trees are growing back and beginning to take over, need to be cut.
 - Dart Hill South – significant storm damage to trees near the parking area; excellent cleanup work was done by Public Works. Grass is growing through on the stonedust trail.
 - Dart Hill North – the trail behind Vernon Gardens was a disaster, much storm damage to the "flood trail". Joe and George cleared the area.
 - Saxony Park – knotweed is growing back and should be sprayed. Joe and George cleaned gardens, the side area needs to be weedwhacked; the locusts need to be cut down.
 - Walgreen corner – Joe and George cleaned the area, badly in need of work.

C. Current Projects – Status

- a. Report – Friends HRLP Rec Trails Grants
 - Dedication of Vernon Marsh area at WPCA was postponed.
 - Windsorville Rd Bridge / Pleasantview Boardwalk Grant: Ann reported that permitting requirements for flood encroachment lines have been eliminated effective Oct 1, so it may make permitting easier for the bridge. Ralph Zahner will look at the site and do some quick surveying of the site. A work scope for bridge design and construction has to be prepared for bidding. Ann will ask Terry for assistance.
 - RDA Design Committee – no new action
 - 19 Grove – no further action

D. Potential Projects and New Grant Applications –

- a. The application is for a "blue trail" on the Hock was submitted by Parks & Recreation Department.

- E. River Protection: Actions, Public Education – George Arthur led a walk along the Dart Hill North trail from Dart Hill Park to the WPCA on April 28th. Fifteen people attended, most did the round trip loop down and back. Jane Seymour, DEEP Wildlife Technician, provided commentary on flora and fauna along the way.

3. New Business –

a. Report on Congressman Larson's HRLP meeting in East Hartford: Ann attended the July 15th meeting. In attendance were several state DOT planning officials; planning, recreation, officials from East Hartford, Manchester, Glastonbury; CT Riverfront Recapture personnel; Laurie Giannotti from DEEP; HRLP committee members from Manchester and Ellington. Focus was on planning "blue way" and "green way" connections, mainly in East Hartford/Manchester area.

b. Ed Dresner memorial – It was decided to put a bench somewhere in the WPCA area, perhaps near the interpretive signs. Ann will review Friends HRLP budget to see what they can afford. Bruce says the bench will cost about \$800.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 am, motion by George, second by Joe.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairperson

GEORGE ARTHUR REPORT (P&R)

March 23, 2013 to July 26, 2013

Joe and I started back on Town payroll on April 1, 2013 (April Fool's Day).

In April, we picked up litter and debris in all parks and schools. Also in April, we built a small bridge to replace the large bridge on the HRLP trail behind Paul's Pizza.

In May, we cleared a path for a loop trail in Platt Park. It will be a boy scout project. We also met with Bruce and a scout for a project to rebuild steps from Tunnel Rd to rail trail. Also in May, we cleaned all gutters and culverts, cleared dead trees and limbs, and whacked a lot of garlic mustard on the 10 miles of rail trails.

In June, we cleared the trees and brush from the top of the Walker's Reservoir dam. The plan is to cut all trees on the State property that are within 25 feet of the bottom of the dam. Also in June, we cleared all trees within 25 feet of the bottom of the Valley Falls dam. The plan is to cut all brush on the slope of the dam.

In July, we cleared the access to the three benches at Walgreens and restored the view to the river – it was a mess. Also in July, we cut all trees that were leaning over the parking spaces at Newhoca Park by the beach. We weed whacked the Hockanum River trail segments between Hockanum Blvd and Dart Hill South. It was badly needed. Vernon Gardens flood trail was damaged by storms; we cleared the area and repaired damage. The black locust trees have grown up to eight feet again in West Main St Park. We cut open the path from the parking lot to the playground,

We will not be able to work for pay beyond July because of the State regulation of part time workers. We will take care of critical items on a volunteer basis.

VERNON GREENWAYS VOLUNTEERS REPORT

March 23, 2013 to July 24, 2013

Spring Kickoff Meeting - May 1, 2013

Thirty two people attended. Featured speaker was Jason Newton who is researching the Old Connecticut Path, the route Thomas Hooker took from Cambridge, Ma to Hartford, Ct

Planting Clean-ups and Mulching for the nine locations - May 7 through June 27

Seven outings total of 94 volunteer hours.

Weed Whacking Crew - June 10 through July 24

Thirteen outings total of 48 volunteer hours. Dart Hill South - Dart Hill South Road to the Stone Dust Trail completed. Dart Hill North - About 80% of 1.4 mile distance completed. Walkers Reservoir - all but about 10% of trail completed.

Install Dog Litter Bag Dispenser – July 1
Boulder Ridge Park Entrance

Pick Up After you Pets Reminder Signs Installed for one week - July 1 and July 20
Boulder Ridge Park - July 1, Church Street - July 20